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ABSTRACT

Management systems have been adapted for educational administration in response to the need for quality of educational opportunity, collective bargaining, school district consolidation, decreasing enrollments, accountability laws, limited financial resources, and participatory decision-making. Management systems adapted, not adopted, from business should include school philosophy, needs assessment, goal statements, organizational structure, objectives, methods and strategies, evaluation, reporting, and evidence of accomplishment. With these components, benefits in providing organizational self-renewal, developing productive involvement, organizing and managing change, establishing accountability, and gaining feedback can be expected. However, the success of any management system begins with acceptance, understanding, and competence in adapting the system to individual roles. (Author/DW)

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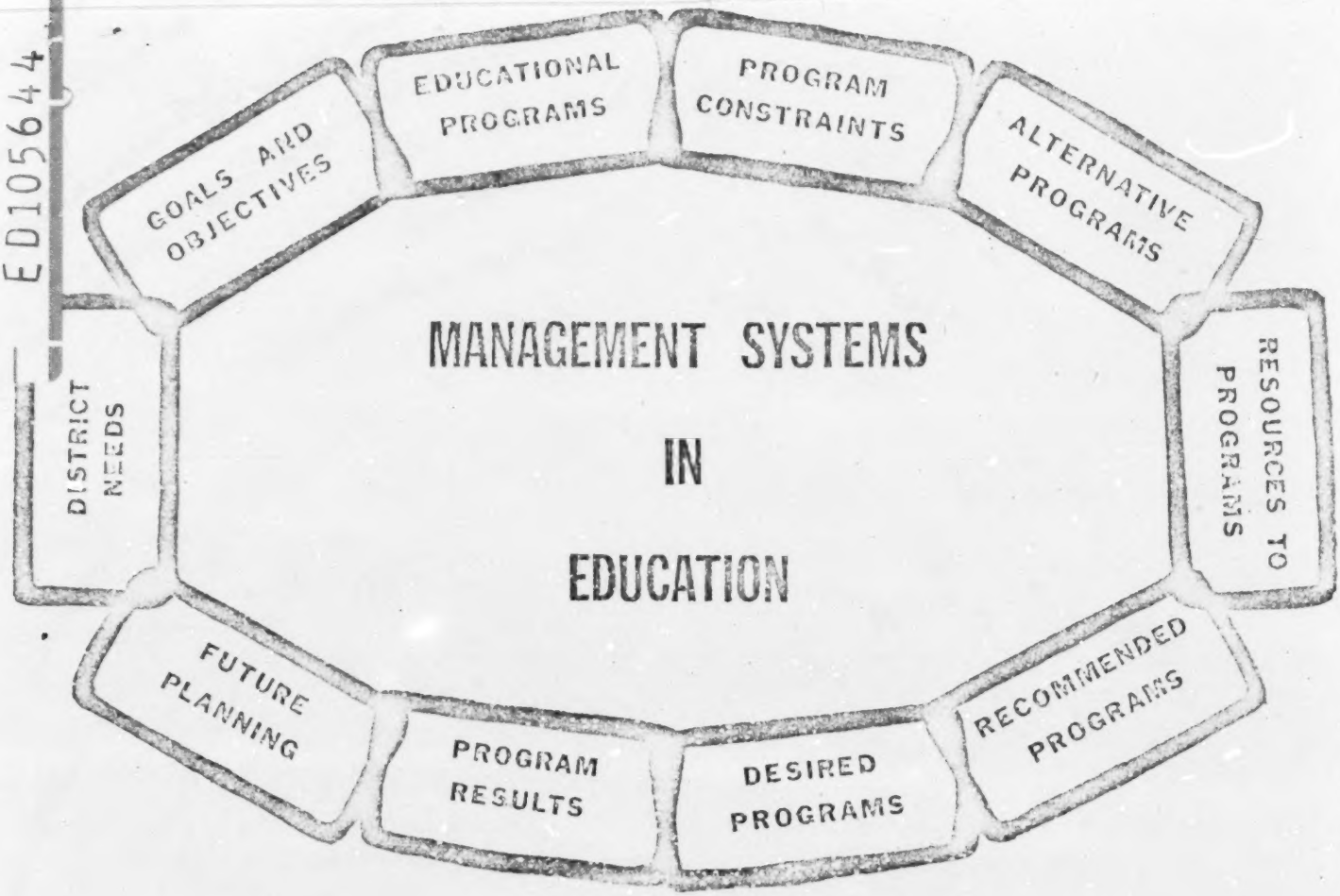

MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN EDUCATION

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MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN EDUCATION

In recent years, administrative practices have embraced popular management systems which promise to deliver organizational efficiency in pursuit of desired results. Many of those noted in the literature have their inception in the arena of private enterprise. The notion that we may be able to borrow from management experiences in business or industry is a credit to practicing school administrators. Exploration of the semantic jungle of terms or acronyms associated with management systems in education has yielded numerous designs for organizations efficiency. The following list includes those commonly noted in contemporary administrative practices.

MBO - Management By Objectives
PPBS - Planning Program Budgeting System
PPBES - Planning Program Budgeting and Evaluation System
ERMS - Educational Resources Management System
ERAS - Educational Resource Allocation System
MIS - Management Information System
EBO - Education By Objectives
LBO - Leadership By Objectives
CBE - Competency Based Education
EBR - Education By Results
ROME - Results Oriented Management In Education
MBR - Management By Results
OD - Organizational Development

School administrators cannot be faulted for lack of consideration or endorsement of utilizing management systems in the search for efficiency. Judging from the numerous experiences and the available evidence thus far, one factor seems eminent for this discussion. The degree of success in utilizing a management system can be attributed to management (school board and school administrators) and not the system being adopted.

Why Management Systems in Education?

There are a number of circumstances contributing to the necessity for effective management of school resources and educational programs.

As educators, we have yet to respond to the challenge that school expenditures have little to do with how well students learn. We are caught in a transition promoted by those who report the results of test scores and those who report per pupil expenditures as a precise means of comparison.

In recent months, judicial interpretations border on erosion of local administrative control as we gather supporting evidence regarding equality of opportunity.

In many instances, the introduction of a management system and the management team concept has been a reaction to the advances of collective bargaining.

The consolidation of school districts throughout the nation has rapidly decreased the number of administrative units and increased the number administrators attached to a basic administrative unit. In 1960, there were a total of 37,475 school corporations throughout the United States. Today the number approximates 16,000. Larger organizations require delicate coordination of the various administrative levels.

The change from a predominantly increasing enrollment to a decreasing enrollment prompts close examinations of how we utilize professional staff more effectively.

The increased number of accountability laws emerging in state legislatures (32 states) and becoming matters of policy in state departments of education have caused us to re-examine the education process and product. If one examines an accountability system, it is obvious management functions within that system and is expected to perform tasks commensurate with the goal of accountability.

Financial resources are extremely limited. Thus, there has been a heavy concentration on how we manage human resources. Administrators are alert to such matters as the impact to technology, and the possibilities it may have in school management.

Numerous publics and organizations are requesting or demanding increased involvement in school decision making. They question the reigning wisdom of how schools should be managed and in the absence of an acceptable response, offer various solutions destined to fragmetize existing school policy and practice.

Principles of a Management System

The principles underlying a management system have much to offer to education. I would reiterate, however, that the key to success lies in adapting, not adopting and in management, not the system. An analysis of management systems in education yields common components essential to productive administration of schools. They are as follows:

A. School Philosophy
   1. Purpose
   2. Intent

B. Evidence of Need

C. Statements of Educational Goals
   1. Professed value judgements
   2. Expectations

D. Organizational Structure
   1. Administrative assignments
   2. Job descriptions

E. Objectives
   1. Management
      a. School board
      b. Administrative Staff
   2. Instructional
      a. Program
      b. Instructional Staff

F. Methods and Strategies
   1. Programs
   2. Activities
   3. Experiences

G. An Accounting of Resources
   1. Program Evaluation
      a. Personnel
      b. Program Budget

H. Reporting System
   1. Dissemination of information

I. Monitoring System
   1. Evidence of accomplishment

Benefits of a Management System

1. It provides a process of self-renewal within the organization.

2. It is a means of productive involvement.

3. It is a means for organizing and managing change.

4. It provides a system of internal accountability.

5. The feed back process enhances the possibility of avoiding management paralysis.

6. It allows us to minimize management weakness and build on management strengths.

What We Have Learned From Our Experience With Management Systems

The life line of an organization resembles the life line of an individual. There are peaks and valleys. We need to develop an attitude that change is normal and to be expected. The strategy (system) by which we anticipate and manage change will determine the success and acceptance by our clients.

Efficient management is the accomplishment of desired goals through the efforts and results of others. We have learned that many individuals aren't comfortable in adapting to new situations and requirements. Much of the energy expended is devoted to maintenance of the status quo and

reinforcement of traditional behavior patterns. Therefore, adherance to formal school policies or formal lines of communication does not always occur. The unwritten policies or informal communications definitely influence decisions. A management system contributes to productive involvement. Mutually developed strategies permit an organization to adapt to new demands.

Most school systems embrace the goal that each youngster should develop his potential to maximum capacity. The same opportunities should be available to each member of the administrative staff functioning within the management system. Organizations (school systems) like individuals can be self-actualizing. Management systems include a commitment to accomplish personal and organizational goals. We have learned that a management team functioning within a management system can be more than just a group of individuals.

Management systems have provided examples of leadership by those who have developed a firm foundation based on management principles, and have attained a firm place to stand amidst the complexities of our times. We have learned the importance of analyzing the path (management system) by which they arrived and the reasons considered in the selection.

We have learned that no one system is best. Success of a management system starts with acceptance. It accelerates with appreciation. The evidence suggests that those with immediate expectations soon resort to abandonment and label their experience as fadish. Some school administrators find commitment to a management system difficult to endorse while others report much success. The degree of success lies in attitude, understanding and competency with which the management system was introduced and implemented.

We have learned that adherance to a management system (PPBS) is useful in determining how we allocate and account for financial resources (costs) of educational programs. We have learned that we can attach some measure of benefit or value to educational programs through evaluation. It is <u>not</u> proper, however, to expect a cost/benefit relationship to exist in education. This belief would remove the dimension of professional judgement of teachers and administrators for which there is no substitute at the present time. It is proper, however, to expect professional judgement to become more proficient in determining how resources (time, money, people) should be allocated for maximum efficiency. Management systems should not be considered mechanistic or humanistic. They are neutral. They are a means of planning for desired results through organization.

Management systems relate primarily to adults whereas students are the recipients of the instructional system. An understanding of adult behavior is critical. Management systems should not ignore the reward system. Do we recognize exemplorary performance and reward longevity instead? Or do we emphasize and reward performance and accomplishment. Positional distance within the organizational structure, i.e. (superintendent to an assistant principal) can easily result in misconceptions, and assumptions. We have learned that an understanding of each individual's role, strengths, and contribution is essential to the successful operation of the management team.

Summary

Management systems aren't new to education. Board members are aware that the hiring of a superintendent delivers certain beliefs, experiences, and styles of leadership. Consequently, when you hire a superintendent, you are adopting a system of management whether he is one individual with only a few administrators to support your effort or a superintendent adorned by a cadre of central office personnel.

It is important for board members to understand the principles behind a management system and be able to recognize the process as it evolves, denoting strengths and inadequacies. While our performance measurements have been seriously inadequate in the past, we can look forward to new insights regarding management of the educational enterprise.

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